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AUTHOR Bass, Angela L.

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ABSTRACT

The critical aspects of a training model used in a program called Turning Point are described. The program allows teachers to make appropriate paradigm shifts that empower them to analyze their own teaching styles and student expectations in an effort to address their students' learning styles more effectively. The training model makes it possible for teachers to recognize the different learning styles and requirements of their students and to address the increasingly diverse populations and the widening gap in achievement among students of varying gender and racial/ethnic groups. Turning Point resource teachers believe that as effective staff developers, their roles are those of coach and resource provider. Project teachers are trained in cooperative learning, learning and behavior styles, peer coaching, gender and ethnic expectations and student achievement, the whole language concept, and curriculum and its philosophical bases. The following training modules are described: (1) total project teacher training; (2) individual site project training; and (3) total staff training. A case study is presented of the school in which Turning Point is operative, an urban elementary school with 38 teachers and a very diverse student population. The common link provided by the program is emphasized. One chart presents model characteristics. (Contains 10 references.) (SLD)

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"I have come to a frightening conclusion
that I am the decisive element in the classroom.
It's my personal approach
that creates the climate.
It's my daily mood that makes the weather.

As a teacher, I possess a tremendous power
to make a child's life miserable or joyous.
I can be a tool of torture
or an instrument of inspiration.

I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal.
In all situations, it is my response
that decides whether a crisis
will be escalated or deescalated
and a child humanized or dehumanized."

Haim Ginott

# TEACHER RECEPTIVITY TO A MULTIDIMENSIONAL TRAINING MODEL: LEARNING/TEACHING STYLES AND EXPECTATIONS

By

Angela L. Bass

Presented at:

American Education Research Association
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Chicago, IL.

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# TURNING POINT PROGRAM

## TEACHER RECEPTIVITY TO A MULTIDIMENSIONAL TRAINING MODEL: LEARNING/TEACHING STYLES AND EXPECTATIONS

By Angela L. Bass

This paper will focus upon the critical aspects of a training model in a program called Turning Point, that allows teachers to make appropriate paradigm shifts which empower them to analyze their own teaching styles and student expectations in an effort to more effectively address their students' learning styles.

## I. BACKGROUND

### Philosophical Base

A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH FOR TEACHING TEACHERS TO REACH STUDENTS THROUGH TEACHING STRATEGIES WITH LEARNING STYLES

A great deal of evidence is now available that gives testimony to the importance of going beyond the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic. We must return to basics, but the "basics" of the 21st century are not only reading, writing, and arithmetic. They include communication, problem-solving skills, and scientific, and technological literacy. Despite the well conducted research pointing to the need for these "new basics" and for innovative instructional programs and teaching strategies, schools continue to function as they did in the last century. Many schools continue to utilize teaching methods and resources that do not address individual differences and actually prevent students from reaching their full potential. Conversely, teaching techniques geared to individual learning styles and teacher/student expectations produce profound and everlasting results.

In recognition of the need to address increasingly diverse populations and the widening gap in achievement among students of varying gender and racial/ethnic groups, the Turning Point Program combines the Teacher Expectation and Student Achievement (TESA) and Gender/Ethnic Expectations in Student Achievement (GESA) with Learning/Teaching Styles. The primary purpose of the program is to explore equitable educational practices in conjunction with strategies for reaching students through their individual learning styles. Integrating TESA/GESA with Learning/Teaching Styles enhances efforts to raise student achievement by altering school philosophies and improving instructional strategies and classroom management techniques.

## Rationale for Integrating TESA/GESA with Learning Styles

This conceptual framework combines the elements of TESA/GESA with Learning Styles and Teaching Styles in order to provide:

- awareness and knowledge of the link between the strategies of TESA/GESA and Learning/Teaching Styles
- a holistic approach to teaching and learning
- bridges that link the TESA/GESA strategies with the student's learning style
- more flexibility for meeting the needs of students and teachers
- increased achievement levels
- a strengthened and enhanced classroom instructional program
- a safe/supportive environment for trying, evaluating, modifying strategies, and trying them again.

A philosophical base for the conceptual framework was established to support the research findings.

## II. TRAINING MODEL

### Philosophy

"We now have an identified core of research-based knowledge not possessed by those outside our profession. We know some things to do even if we cannot control such external factors such as: socioeconomic status, family or neighborhood situations, or previous learning history," says Madeline Hunter. She goes on to say, "We know that teachers are the decision-makers. All principles of learning and methodology are subject to teacher judgement." Classroom teachers need to be able to teach using research-based knowledge, current data, a variety of teaching models, instructional strategies, and intuition. Continuous examination and modification of methodologies and practices is critical for professional growth and academic success for students.

Teachers with the appropriate staff development truly affect what happens in school and the successful learning experience for students. In addition, by providing teachers with relevant research-based information and practical application, the teacher is allowed to remain in a profession with updated skills, enthusiasm, and motivation.

The Turning Point training model allows teachers to make a paradigm shift from:

- thinking that all students learn in the same way, to there is no one most effective way of learning;
- from thinking that all teachers should teach the same way to, there is no one more effective way to teach;
- from classroom environments looking all the same, to classrooms meeting the individual needs of all the students

Learning/Teaching Styles

"One of the greatest shortcomings of the schools seems to be their own inflexibility when it comes to teaching a subject or skill. Teachers present the material in one way--usually through some combination of lectures, blackboard lessons, textbooks, and worksheets--and if children don't get it, then it's their problem, not the teachers'." (Armstrong 1987) We know, based on the research by Swassing (1978), Barbe (1978), McCarthy (1988), Piaget, Dunn (1976), Gregorc (1985), and Gardner (1988), that children learn in many ways and that educators need to become cognizant of how humans learn so that they create an environment that is conducive to optimal learning of all children.

It is time for schools to start focusing on the innate abilities that children possess rather than on the traditional educational formula that is not totally consistent with developmental learning and cognition.

Teaching methods of the 1990s should be different from approaches that have been traditionally used. Our charge as educators is to educate children of various cultural and ethnic groups, children exposed to a society that is in the thrust of high technological evolution, and a world that demands a quality education in order to survive.

The Turning Point training model is based on the notion that by providing research and training in the various concepts of learning, academic achievement will improve.

Based on the conceptual framework, a philosophical base was needed to establish support for the research findings.

## III. EXPECTATIONS

Philosop[illegible]

Brophy and Good (1987) say, "Teachers are often unaware of much of what they do, and this lack of perception sometimes results in unwise, self-defeating behavior." They believe that teachers need to become aware of what is happening in the classroom, monitor accurately their behavior and that of their students. Even with such skills, some teachers may have inappropriately low expectations of students' ability to learn or their own ability to teach. (p.3)

The Turning Point training model is multidimensional because it has merged both learning/teaching styles and student expectations with emphasis on gender and ethnicity (GESA, Gender/Ethnic Expectations and [illegible]udent Achievement).

GESA is a program carefully designed to help teachers make constructive changes in the way they interact with students and in so doing, to free themselves from stereotypical race and gender roles and expectations. (Grayson, 1988)

## IV. STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Outcomes

Recognizing the need to address increasingly diverse populations and the widening gap in achievement among students of varying gender and racial/ethnic groups, the rationale for linking teaching/learning style with teacher expectations, establishes the basis for the pedagogy of Turning Point. By blending the concepts of Teaching/Learning Styles, Teacher Expectation and Student Achievement (TESA), and Gender Ethnic Expectations and Student Achievement

(GESA), the research suggests the following outcomes for student academic success should occur:

- higher achievement
- increased retention
- greater use of higher level reasoning skills
- greater intrinsic motivation
- more positive heterogeneous relationships
- better attitudes toward teachers
- higher self-esteem
- more positive psychological adjustment
- more on-task behavior
- greater collaborative skills

To support the conceptual Teaching/Learning Styles and TESA/GESA, it is imperative to examine the aspects of staff development that support the conceptual framework of Turning Point.

## V. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

### Project Teacher Philosophy

According to Joyce and Showers' (1989) "coaching programs represent powerful strategies for implementing instructional improvements that impact student learning." In their work, coaching is:

a) attached to training;

b) continuous;

c) experimental in nature; and

d) separate from supervision and evaluation

It involves theory, demonstration, practice, feedback, and follow-through support. (p.9)

The Turning Point resource teachers believe that to be effective staff developers, their role should be that of "coach" and resource provider. The goal is for project teachers to feel th

- they are given current research information
- they are allowed to share their classroom successes and failures in a safe environment
- they are allowed to explore their own talents and creativity
- they are provided with resources necessary to enhance teaching and learning, and are continuously supported

The goals for the project resource teachers are to:

- become aware of the need for improvement through analysis of their own observation profile;
- make a written commitment to try new ideas in their classrooms;
- modify workshop ideas to work in their classrooms and schools;
- try the ideas and evaluate the effect;
- observe other classrooms;
- report their successes to the group;
- discuss problems and solutions regarding individual students and/or teaching subject matter;
- utilize a wide variety of approaches such as: simulations, videotapes, presenting at meetings, modeling, observations, etc.
- they learn (in their way) continuity in goal-setting

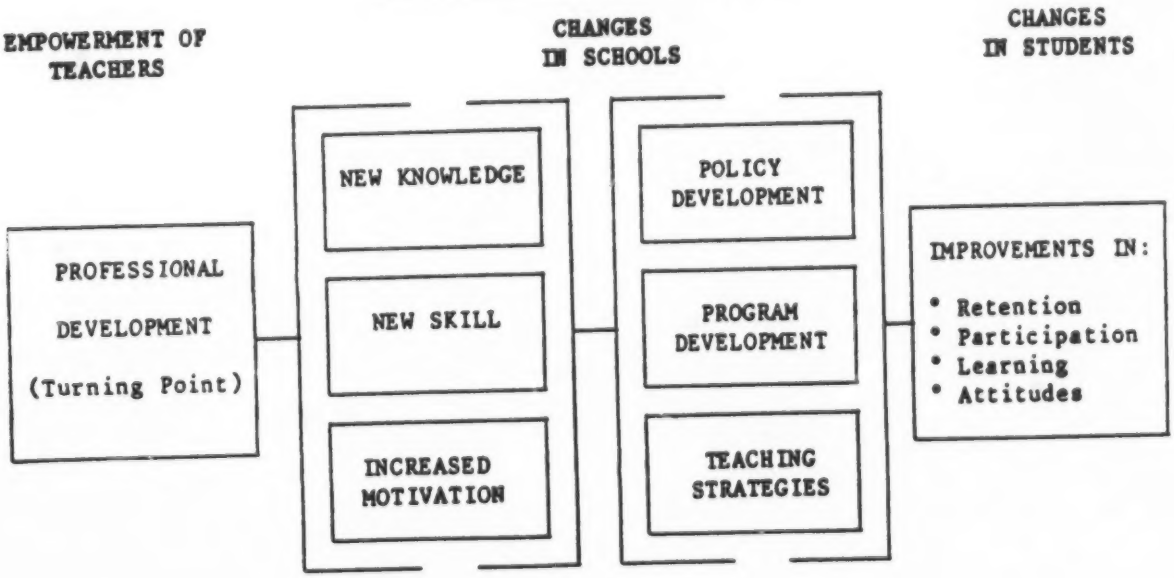
## VI. PROJECT TEACHERS TRAINING

The project teachers were systematically trained in the following instructional strategies:

- Cooperative Learning
- Learning Styles
- Behavior Styles
- Peer Coaching
- Gender Ethnic Expectations and Student Achievement
- Whole Language Concept
- Curriculum and it's Philosophical Bases

This multidimensional training model provides a global perspective of how staff development can lead to successful conceptual outcomes that can improve education.

**TURNING POINT STAFF DEVELOPMENT**




* Adapted from Joyce, Showers, 1989.

Forty-one teachers, from seven magnet schools, were identified in the first year of the project, as project teachers, through an application process. The first year goals for these teachers included:

- Team-Building
- Teaching Methods
- Expectations
- Personal Assessment
- Classroom Environment
- Staff Attitudes
- Student Attitudes
- Valuing Diversity
- Cognitive Style/Learning Style
- Academic Achievement

The outcomes for students are to:

- have opportunities to learn in ways they prefer
- have positive, successful learning experiences in new situations and tasks
- develop learning style flexibility

The outcomes for project teachers are to:

- have positive successful teaching experiences
- develop teaching style flexibility
- become empowered through enhanced understanding of teaching and learning

## VII. TURNING POINT TRAINING - MODULES

### Background

It was important to build a cohesive team of project teachers who trusted each other enough to share their successes and failures, to gain perspective from one another based on their experience, to network outside of their own classrooms, and to internalize the common philosophical base of Turning Point.

It was clear that each of the seven sites had their own particular needs and the

project teachers assisted each of them in establishing goals that pertained only to their site. It was also important for each site team member to bond with one another so they could serve as support and resource to each other.

Another essential aspect of the Turning Point Project was to provide training to the total site staff at each of the seven sites; to further expand on the Turning Point philosophy; and to maintain cohesiveness with site staffs and their project teachers.

The training sessions were developed in three modules:

- total project teacher training
- individual site project teacher training
- total school site staff training

## VIII. TRAINING MODULE #1 - TOTAL PROJECT TEACHER TRAINING

### Team-Building/Personal Style to Student Style

The project teachers were introduced to the Turning Point Project training by providing a team-building workshop. The teachers participated in an activity called "Autobiographical Sharing." This activity established commonalities, differences, and the understanding that it is very important to communicate with each other in order to internalize a common philosophical base. The teachers found this to be very enlightening and self-actualizing. Connection was made with their personal experience and the students in their classroom. They realized the need to get to know their students on a more personal level. They also realized that the students in their classes were more complex than they had previously thought. Tony Wilson verbalized by saying, "Wow, I probably have only five or six kids in my classroom that I really know."

A personal profile called the "Gregorc Style Delineator," was administered to project teachers. This instrument was the first of many learning style assessments taken by the project teachers. Through these instruments, the teachers were able to identify their own style and recognize that people do indeed have different styles. They were able to see that humans think, react, and learn differently. The philosophical base of the Gregorc was introduced. This further expanded the concept that if they had certain ways of functioning, so did their students. The teacher consciousness was dramatically raised. They understood the concepts of people's thinking process, of concrete to abstract, and sequential to random. Jane Dilliard, whose learning styles assessment identified her as an abstract random said, (Gregorc instrument identified in 'Linking Teaching/Learning Styles with Teacher Expectations,' Barbra Balser), "Now I know why some of my students don't get it when I am giving assignments; I need to be more sequential."

**Teacher Expectation and Student Achievement/Gender/Ethnic Expectation and Student Achievement - T.E.S.A./G.E.S.A.**

A critical aspect of Turning Point's Multidimensional Model was the inclusion of the concepts of TESA/GESA. It was important that teachers recognized that they were an essential element that determines success or failure of students. The training model provided the project teachers with activities that allowed them to examine and reflect on their expectations for students in the classroom. The project teachers, through activities such as "How Would Your Life be Different if You Were Born a Different Gender or Race?," were able to see the necessity to examine equitable practices in the classroom. They were provided with instruc-

tional strategies of the GESA Program. The program provides research on expectation and equity with the following workshop themes:

G. E. S. A.
GENDER/ETHNIC EXPECTATIONS AND
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

| AREAS OF DISPARITY (Workshop Themes) | LEARNING CLIMATE (Interactions) | Instructional Management (Curriculum-Related) |
|---|---|---|
| I. Instructional Contact | Response Opportunities/ Acknowledgement | Evaluating Materials for Bias |
| II. Grouping/Organization | Wait Time/Physical Closeness | Math/Science/Technology |
| III. Discipline | Touching/Reproof | Multicultural Resources |
| IV. Self-Concept | Probing/Listening | Gender/Ethnic Balance in History |
| V. Evaluation | High Level Questioning/ Analytical Feedback | Physical Activities |

The project teachers were able to personally examine the workshop themes and concepts. Through role-play and expanded assignments, they were able to do "self-checks." They would come back to the project trainings and share their experiences with the larger group and ask for suggestions as well as positive support. The teachers felt safe to share and seek help because the model had already built in a common philosophy team-building and had erased the "fear of failure" syndrome. All of the teachers knew that the outcome was student achievement and in order to attain that, they needed research-based information, strategies, practical application, and support from resource teachers and project teachers. Debbie Jones said, "For the first time in my fifteen years of teaching, I realized that I was not being equitable with <u>all</u> of my students and I shouldn't

blame myself, I should change some of my teaching practices. I always knew I was a good teacher, but now I can be even better."

## IX. INDIVIDUAL SITE PROJECT: TEACHER TRAINING

### TRAINING MODULE #2

**Site Teams**

The number of project teachers at each site was critical to the success of the Turning Point project because in order for changes to occur at any school, it is important to have a "critical mass." It was determined that a "critical mass" was to be between 4 and 8 teachers per school site. It was also important to have teachers from several grade levels.

Individual site team training consisted of each school team identifying particular needs and concerns, unique to their site. The teachers would receive training on the following:

- classroom management
- school discipline
- African American culture
- Bilingual/bicultural child
- classroom environment

The site teams would also develop or design a way to present this information to the total staff.

## X. TRAINING MODULE #3 - TOTAL STAFF TRAINING

Another essential aspect of the Turning Point Project was to provide training to the total site staff at each of the seven sites; to further expand on the

Turning Point philosophy; and to maintain cohesiveness with site staff and their project teachers.

The staff received a minimum of seven hours of training on the following:

- Personality Inventory
- Perceptual Modalities
- Environmental Aspects that Affect Learning
- Summary of Research on Learning Styles
- Expectations

## XI. TURNING POINT SCHOOL PROFILE

### Teachers

The teachers in the Turning Point Project teach grades K-6. Two teachers are resource teacher specialists, two teach severely emotionally disturbed, five teachers are certified Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) teachers, six are certified bilingual teachers, and one teacher is a site magnet resource teacher. The ethnic and gender make-up of the teachers consists of twenty-five White teachers, seven Hispanic teachers, and six African American teachers. There are 34 female teachers and four male teachers.

### Student Ethnic Distribution

The Turning Point program is being implemented in an urban school district with a very diverse school population. The ethnic distribution of the students is reflected in this multidimensional program. The students in the program consist

of the following ethnic populations: Hispanic, African American, White, Asian, Filipino, Indochinese, Pacific Islander, and Native American.

# MULTIDIMENSIONAL TRAINING MODEL

## CASE STUDY DATA
## 1989 - 1990

| SCHOOLS | NUMBER OF RESOURCE TEACHERS | GRADE LEVEL OF TEACHERS | STUDENT ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION 1989-90 (Percentages) | TRAINING MODULES (See note below) | SITE GOALS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Newton Elementary | 6 | • 2/3 Bilingual<br>• 5/6 Sp. Ed.<br>• K-1 Combinat.<br>• 5/6 Spec. Ed. Bilingual<br>• 4/5 Bilingual | 82% Hispanic<br>14% White<br>1.8% African Americ.<br>0.9% Asian<br>0.5% Filipino | * 6 sessions<br>** 4 sessions<br>*** 3 sessions | * Project teachers will participate in the new administrator selection process.<br>* Staff will focus on cooperative learning strategies. |
| Bring Elementary | 6 | • Resource Special.<br>• 6th Grade<br>• 1st Grade<br>• Kindergarten<br>• 4th Grade GATE<br>• 5th Grade GATE | 14% Hispanic<br>59% White<br>19% African Americ.<br>2.6% Asian<br>0.4% Pacif. Island.<br>0/4% Filipino<br>1.2% Indochinese<br>2.4% Native Americ. | * 6 sessions<br>** 5 sessions<br>*** 3 sessions<br>**** 1 session | * Total staff will participate in a whole language training session.<br>**Project teachers will participate in a session that addresses creativity and motivation. |
| Grand Elementary | 7 | • 6th Grade Gate<br>• 2nd Grade GATE<br>• 1st Grade GATE<br>• 5th Grade<br>• 4th Grade<br>• 5th Grade<br>• 1st Grade | 14% Hispanic<br>48% White<br>32% African Americ.<br>1.6% Asian<br>0.6% Pacif. Island.<br>1.0% Filipino<br>0.8% Indochinese<br>0.8% Native Americ. | * 6 sessions<br>** 5 sessions<br>*** 4 sessions<br>**** 2 sessions<br>*****1 session | * Staff will participate in a workshop to address discipline policy on site.<br>* Staff will participate in a workshop on team-building. |

Note: * Total project teacher training
** Single site training
*** Site staff training
**** Parent training
***** Instructional Aides
GATE Gifted and Talented Education

# MULTIDIMENSIONAL TRAINING MODEL

CASE STUDY DATA
1989 - 1990
(Cont'd)

| SCHOOLS | NUMBER OF RESOURCE TEACHERS | GRADE LEVEL OF TEACHERS | STUDENT ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION 1989-90 (Percentages) | TRAINING MODULES (See note below) | SITE GOALS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Jenkins Elementary | 6 | • Magnet Res. Tchr.<br>• Reading Specialist<br>• K-6 Resource Tchr. Severely Emotional. Disturbed Children<br>• 1st Grade<br>• Kindergarten<br>• Kindergarten | 12.1% Hispanic<br>23% White<br>62% African Amer.<br>0.2% Pacif. Island.<br>0.6 Filipino<br>1.0 Indochinese | * 6 sessions<br>** 5 sessions<br>*** 3 sessions | * Total staff will attend a workshop to examine their own learning styles.<br>* Staff will participate in a workshop to establish the school site mission statement. |
| Friar Elementary | 4 | • 3rd Grade<br>• 1/2 Grade Combin.<br>• 1st Grade<br>• 6th Grade | 17% Hispanic<br>25% White<br>41% African Americ.<br>2.0% Asian<br>2.0% Pacif. Island.<br>9.1% Filipino<br>0.4% Native Americ. | * 6 sessions<br>** 4 sessions<br>*** 3 sessions | * The site will participate in a grade level share-a-thon that will promote sharing new and creative ideas with peers.<br>* Project teachers will share research articles about learning styles. |
| Fitzgerald Elementary | 6 | • 5/6 Grade GATE<br>• 2nd Grade<br>• 3rd Grade<br>• Kindergarten<br>• 6th Grade<br>• 6th Grade | 8.5 Hispanic<br>25% White<br>49.3% African Americ.<br>0.1% Asian<br>2.3% Pacif. Island.<br>9.8% Filipino<br>3.8% Indochinese | * 6 sessions<br>** 4 sessions<br>*** 3 sessions | * Staff will participate in a site team-building workshop.<br>* Staff will participate in a workshop to examine "Expectations and the African American Male." |

Note: * Total project teacher training
** Single site training
*** Site staff training
**** Parent training
***** Instructional Aides
GATE Gifted and Talented Education

# MULTIDIMENSIONAL TRAINING MODEL

CASE STUDY DATA
1989 - 1990
(Cont'd)

| SCHOOLS | NUMBER OF RESOURCE TEACHERS | GRADE LEVEL OF TEACHERS | STUDENT ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION 1989-90 (Percentages) | TRAINING MODULES (See note below) | SITE GOALS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Martin Elementary | 4 | • 4/5 Grade Combin.<br>• 5th Grade<br>• 3/4 Grade<br>• 2nd Grade | 30% Hispanic<br>47% White<br>19.3% African Americ.<br>0.2% Asian<br>0.2% Pacif. Island.<br>0.9% Filipino<br>1.4% Native Americ. | * 6 sessions<br>** 4 sessions<br>*** 3 sessions | * Total staff will participate in a site team-building workshop.<br>* Staff will participate in a workshop to examine "Expectations and the African American Male." |

Note: * Total project teacher training
** Single site training
*** Site staff training
**** Parent training
***** Instructional Aides
GATE Gifted and Talented Education

## XII. CASE STUDY

### Correlations

Though each school site team had established a common philosophical base, they each had different levels of development in the total Multidimensional Model that Turning Point provided. The following is a brief case study of three of the seven school sites.

### Jenkins Elementary School

Jenkins Elementary School has six teachers in the project. The teachers at this school varied in many ways. Three of the teachers were relatively new to education (one first-year teacher and two second-year teachers). Four of the teachers were new to the school site and Jenkins had just been assigned a new principal. Turning Point had established a philosophical base for the project teachers, yet, with the transition of new teachers and a new principal, the school site had not established the school's mission. The teachers in the project were becoming very cohesive, but it was clear that the total site had not established this. It became clear that before we could effectively look at teaching, learning, and expectations, the school first needed to do team-building and establish consensus of a school mission statement. Through Turning Point, the project teachers decided to make this a goal for the year.

The project teachers designed workshops for the total staff that met the site's needs of team-building and identifying a mission statement. Receptivity by the total staff was positive because the workshops were designed by their peers.

These workshops paved the way for a school in transition. It was clear that this school had special needs and would not have the same outcomes for the first year.

Newton Elementary School

Newton Elementary School has six teachers in the project. Five of the teachers are bilingual teachers, a school that is predominantly Hispanic (82%). All of the teachers were established and have taught between seven and eighteen years in education. All of them have been at Newton at least four years. The project teachers had already established a good relationship with each other before Turning Point, and had encouraged each other to participate. The principal of the school was serving her last year as administrator, before retirement. The teachers quickly began to make connections with the training they were receiving. They began by assessing their classroom environment and changing it from the "traditional" format of desks in uniform rows to moving desks to meet the learning needs of students. They tried the strategies of Cooperative Learning in their classrooms. Although some experienced varying levels of discomfort with these changes, they acknowledged that students who were not learning in the "traditional" fashion, were learning more and were enjoying school more. They noticed that the students who typically were not actively engaged in learning, began to show enthusiasm and were participating. Teachers noticed overall, the students' work was improving.

Juanita Diaz, a 5/6 classroom teacher said, "Julio came up to her one day and said, 'Mrs. Diaz, I really like working with Pedro because he explains things to me when I don't get it.' This really let me know that the changes I was making in the classroom were making a difference and if he was learning, I could adjust

to having my students talking and sharing in cooperative groups." The teachers were sharing their successes with each other and they were motivated to continue evaluating their teaching practices.

Another area the teachers became increasingly aware of was that the supportive principal they currently had, was retiring and they were concerned that the new principal would not share in their enthusiasm and support them in the changes that were occurring. It was decided that they needed to play a role in selecting the new principal. They set up a meeting with the current principal to see if this was possible. The principal agreed that this was a good idea. Three of the project teachers participated in the interview process of the new principal selection. They were allowed to develop questions that would be a part of the interview and ultimately help make a decision as to who the new principal would be. The fact that the Turning Point teachers were allowed to participate in the principal selection process, was very empowering for them and paved the way to take a more active role in their school.

Grand Elementary School

Grand Elementary School has seven project teachers. All of the teachers have many years experience in education (10-15 years). The teachers have all been at the school, at least three years. The total staff is extremely close knit and they all have a very good working relationship. The project teachers were very excited with the prospect of having Turning Point become a part of their school philosophy. Teachers actively recruited teachers to apply to the project. They were extremely enthusiastic. They had a real sense of "teamness" about them. They also wanted to make teaching/learning the best at Grand Elementary! The teachers

were very active participants in the project training sessions. They asked lots of questions and shared many experiences with their peers. The teachers traditionally had a "sharing" relationship at their site and it was very evident to the other project teachers. Following each total site training, the teacher would apply at least one concept to the classroom. They were amazed at student's receptivity and student's progress.

Cindy, a fifth-grade teacher, decided to have her students write in journals about how they learned best and when learning was difficult for them. The students were able to articulate whether they like bright lights or low lights, whether they liked working by themselves or working with others, whether they learn best by visual, auditory, or kinesthetic modes. She was totally amazed at how accurate the students were in identifying their optimal learning environments. She went on to say, "I realized for the first time in my teaching career that we need to allow students to become active participants in learning and that my kids made very wise decisions about their learning styles."

The enthusiasm became quite apparent by their total site staff. Many teachers at their site were curious about the excitement that was permeating at Grand Elementary. Some teachers were concerned because there was true cynergy with these seven teachers. They weren't sure if this would change the school for the better, but overall, their enthusiasm created a "ripple" effect. The project teachers were sharing ideas and information with their colleagues. Turning Point had a powerful effect on Grand Elementary School.

Another positive effect Turning Point had on Grand was that when the project teachers began to implement and value learning styles and high expectations,

they realized that many of their discipline problems decreased. The teachers' students had choices with accountability, the students were more actively engaged in learning. As a result of this realization, the project teachers decided to plan a workshop to reexamine the school site discipline policy. By inservicing the total staff in learning/teaching and G.E.S.A., teachers rewrote the school site discipline policy so that it would maintain high standards for students and, at the same time, recognize style as an important consideration in its development. The project teachers had made a critical paradigm shift for themselves and their site.

## Summary

It is clear that the Turning Point Multidimensional Training Model is an essential element that affects academic achievement. It is evident that all schools function and move at different paces and levels. Every school has dynammics that are unique and develop at varying times. Factors such as: school size, class size, ethnic/cultural diversity of students and teachers, socioeconomic status of school population, special programs, and many others create a culture that is unique. The Turning Point Multidimensional Training Model provides a common link for all of its schools, a common philosophy. By providing teachers with current research, instructional strategies, practical application to the classroom, and ongoing support from peers, principals, and resource teachers, all students can achieve and teachers can continue to teach while being successful.

## Conclusion

"All education springs from some image of the future.
If the image of the future held by a society
is grossly inaccurate, its education system
will betray its youth."

Alvin Toffler

The quality of education provided for our children is a major concern in American society. America realizes that we must produce literate thinking adults in order to sustain our place in the world's market place. The Turning Point Multidimensional Training Model is designed with a belief that all children can/will learn and we must have high expectations in order to achieve academic achievement.

"Together We Can Make A Difference."

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